

CARDINAL SAYS PAPAL SUPREMACY ESSENTIAL/ "SAINT" AUGUSTINE CELEBRATIONS

June 12, 1997 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) -

Speaking in the Anglican Canterbury Cathedral, Cardinal Basil Hume, the highest Catholic figure in England and Wales, declared that efforts towards Christian unity could not include renunciation of the primacy of the Pope. "Echoing the Pope's 1995 encyclical 'Ut Unum Sint,' ['That They May Be One'] Hume said: 'It is not the primacy as such that is open to debate, but the manner of its exercise. That is important. It does not threaten, and indeed should not'" (Ecumenical News International, May 28, 1997).

Hume spoke these words on the occasion of a three-day celebration marking the 1400th anniversary of Austin's (also called Augustine) arrival in England in A.D. 597 as representative of Pope Gregory to "evangelize the Anglo-Saxons." In reality, though largely hidden from our eyes behind the smoke of persecution and the fog of age-old apostasy, there is evidence that the pure Gospel had been carried to the British Isles during the first century. Austin, who was declared a saint by the Catholic Church, did not bring the pure apostolic Gospel of the grace of Christ to England; he brought Rome's corrupt sacramental gospel which intermingles grace with works. He also brought infant baptism. In a day or two we plan to publish an article which describes early British church history. It is entitled "What Did 'Saint' Augustine Do for England?" For now we offer the following overview of this matter from the pen of the diligent and learned Baptist historian David Benedict (1779-1874):

"About sixty years after the ascension of our Lord, Christianity was planted in Britain, and a number of royal blood, and many of inferior birth, were called to be saints. Here the gospel flourished much in early times, and here also its followers endured many afflictions and calamities from pagan persecutors. The British Christians experienced various changes of prosperity and adversity until about the year 600. A little previous to this period, Austin the monk, that famous Pede-baptist and persecutor, with about forty others, were sent here by pope Gregory the great, to convert the pagans to popery, and to subject all the British Christians to the dominion of Rome. The enterprise succeeded, and conversion (or rather perversion) work was performed on a large scale. ...

"The Baptist historians in England contend that the first British Christians were Baptists [in practice], and that they maintained Baptist principles until the coming of Austin. 'We have no mention,' says the author of the Memoirs, 'of the christening or baptizing children in England, before the coming of Austin in 597; and to us it is evident he brought it not from heaven but from Rome. ... From the coming of Austin the church in this island was divided into two parts, the old and the new. The old or Baptist church maintained their original principles. But the new church adopted infant baptism, and the rest of the multiplying superstitions of Rome' (David

Benedict, A General History of the Baptist Denomination, Vol. 1, Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1813, pp. 190-191).

As for the biblical purity of "Saint" Austin's ministry, the historian Thomas Armitage (1819-1896) adds: "But, in the looseness of the times, Austin had been instructed to adapt the ceremonies of Christianity to the usages of the idolaters, that they might not be shocked by too great a change. And this was done. Bede tells us that there was often an altar for the sacrifices of paganism and one for Christianity in the same temple; and Procopius his contemporary adds, that some who had embraced Christianity continued to offer human sacrifices. The old British Christians, however, sternly opposed the pretensions of Austin, who assumed great pomp and arrogance; spending more of his time in reducing them to conformity to what he called 'the unity of the Catholic Church,' than in converting the heathen. Up to that time, the Christians of what are now England, Ireland and Scotland had been free from the direct jurisdiction of Rome, and had maintained their ancient rites and customs" (Armitage, A History of the Baptists, 1890, Vol. 1, p. 229).

George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury (the highest office in the Anglican denomination), was present for Hume's speech. In his own sermon, Carey said that the history of Christianity is "littered with tragedy and division, the results of which remain with us today." He asked: "Can we, successors of Augustine's mission in this land, reach for a vision of reconciliation that will lead us to THE UNITY WHICH WE KNOW TO BE THE WILL OF GOD? ... WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON VASTLY OUTSTRIPS ALL THAT DIVIDES, set as we are in a society which is careless about Augustine's faith, let alone the denominational differences which separate us."

Carey is correct in his assessment. Nothing significant divides his denomination from Rome. They are united in common apostasy. Anglicanism will eventually return to its mother.

Hume said it is not the primacy of the papacy as such that is open to debate, but only the manner of its exercise. This might be true for apostate Protestant leaders such as George Carey, but for ourselves, we reject the Roman dogma of the papacy in its entirety. The Pope of Rome has absolutely no biblical authority for his position. He has blasphemously usurped the place of Jesus Christ, the sole Head of the church, and of the Holy Spirit, the sole Vicar, or representative, of Christ in this world. There is no pope in the New Testament Scriptures. Peter was definitely not a pope, and there is no evidence that he was the pastor of Rome. He was a married man. He did not claim nor exercise papal type authority over all of the churches. He was not called "Father" or "His Holiness" or "Vicar of Christ" or "Pontiff." See our article "Peter vs. the Popes" at the End Times Apostasy Online Database <<http://wayoflife.org/~dcloud>> or in the O Timothy Computer Library.